



## **VIA LATINA 22**

**# 328 - February 2024**

**News from the General Administration of the Society of Mary**

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## **Perpetual Profession and Silver Jubilee in the Region of Eastern Africa**

Brother John Kamau Mwaura, SM, professed his perpetual vows of Chastity, Poverty, Obedience, and Stability in the Society of Mary on 30th December 2023. The colorful celebration took place in Nairobi at the conclusion of the Regional Assembly. Brother John's family members, close to sixty Marianist religious from the Region of Eastern Africa, lay Marianists, and other Christians witnessed Brother John's definitive commitment.



**Brother John Kamau is in the middle, signing his perpetual vows.**

Fr Stephen Wanyoike Mburu, the Regional Superior, was the main celebrant and homilist for the liturgy and received the vows in the name of the Superior General. Brother John will continue ministering in Karonga, Malawi, and we assure him of our support and prayers.



**From Left: Fr. Michael Otieno, Bro. Paul Kageche, Fr Stephen Wanyoike, and Bro. Joseph Maricky – The Silver Jubilarians.**

In the same celebration, the Region of Eastern Africa joined Fr Michael Otieno, Bro. Paul Kageche, Bro. Joseph Maricky, and Fr Stephen Wanyoike in their thanksgiving to God as they celebrated their silver jubilee. We thank God for His faithfulness to the four brothers and their perseverance.

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## Perpetual Profession in the District of India

On January 22, 2024 the District of India joyfully witnessed the Perpetual Profession of Bros. Ajay Soreng, Mathew Mullangi, and Pitar Tirkey. The ceremony was held at the Marianist Campus, Deepahalli, in Bangalore, India.



**In the middle from left to right Bros. Ajay Soreng, Mathew Mulangi and Pitar Tirkey with members of the District Council.**

The three brothers Ajay, Mathew, and Pitar have been dedicated brothers of our communities, demonstrating unwavering devotion, a profound sense of service, and a commitment to living out the core values of our Society. Their journey towards Perpetual Profession has been a testament to their deep faith and discernment. The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Fr. Sudhir Kujur, SM, the District Superior of India. The homily emphasized the significance of the vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and stability that Ajay, Mathew, and Pitar willingly undertook for a lifetime of service to our Blessed Mother and the Church at large.



The ceremony was witnessed by Bro. Ed Violet, SM, who represented the Province of the USA, Bro. Maximin Magnan, SM, Assistant General for Education, the Regional Superiors of SM and FMI from Korea, Japan, the participants of Asian Marianist Family Symposium, Marianists from India, our neighboring religious communities, our collaborators in our ministries, as well as the family and friends of our brothers who professed the vows.



**In the middle from left to right Bros. Mathew Mullangi, Ajay Soreng and Pitar Tirkey with Bros. Maximin Magnan, Ed Violett and members of the District Council.**

Following the Holy Eucharist, there was time to celebrate with the brothers through traditional dances and festive meals. Bros. Ed Violett and Maximin Magnan shared the greetings they had carried from the Provincial, Fr. Oscar Vasquez SM and from Superior General, Fr. André-Joseph Fétis SM.

It was an opportunity for everyone present to extend their congratulations and share in the happiness of this significant moment. May the journey of Bros. Ajay, Mathew, and Pitar be filled with continued growth, spiritual fulfillment, and the grace to live out their vows in service to our community.

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## Appointment of the Provincial in the Province of Spain



The General Council has appointed Fr. Iñaki Sarasua Maritxalar, SM, as Provincial Superior of the Province of Spain for a second term of three-years, beginning September 1, 2024. In the consultation carried out among the religious of the Province, they overwhelmingly supported this reappointment of Father Iñaki as Provincial Superior. We thank Fr. Iñaki for having accepted with humble spirit and availability the commitment to this fraternal service.

Iñaki made his first vows in 1986. He recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. In addition to his many years of service in the Provincial Council (as assistant and as superior), he has worked as a teacher and pastor in various communities and works of the Province of Spain. We offer him our prayers and fraternal support.

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## A new Superior for the new Region of India



In May, the District of India will become the Region of India. To lead it, a superior has just been appointed by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. Brother Prakash Kujur, SM. With the support of the brothers and the help of his council, will assume the important responsibility of animating this vast Unit as it enters a new phase in its history. We thank him for his generous response to this important service.

A Region has all the characteristics of a fully constituted Unit. The creation of a new Region calls on its members to live, with new intensity, a solid religious life by continuing to strengthen its human, spiritual and charismatic foundations: a task that is never complete. With regard to the Society of Mary as a whole, the

Region is called upon to play its full role within the Congregation, which relies on its specific contribution to the life of the entire Society of Mary.



**Fr. Sudhir Kujur, SM**



**Bro. Darwin Joseph, SM**

We would like to thank Fr. Sudhir Kujur, SM, his Assistant, Bro. Darwin Joseph, SM, and the entire current Council for their service to the District in recent years. We are particularly grateful to them for preparing the District for this new phase. Our thanks also go to the province of the United States of America, which has accompanied the Unit of India with perseverance and generosity from its birth to the present day.

Let us support these important steps with our prayers.

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## **Marianist Family of Asia Symposium on Marianist Education**

From January 16 to 23, 2024, a Symposium organized by the Marianist Family of Asia was held in Bangalore, India. The general theme was: *"Characteristics of Marianist Education in Asian Spiritual Traditions and in the Digital Age"*. Coordinated by the Zonal Marianist Studies Centre in Bangalore, the symposium brought together 28 participants from India, Korea, Japan and Vietnam, including SM brothers, FMI sisters and CLM members. The overall theme was dissected into several sub-themes, offering a nuanced exploration of the complex interplay between the values of Marianist education, Asian spiritualities and traditions, and the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital age.



Brother E. Max Magnan, SM, Assistant General for Education, opened the meeting by presenting the *Characteristics of Marianist Education* (CEM). Starting with an explanation of what the "Marianist Spirit" is, he first explained how the CEMs emanate from this spirit. He went on to underline the contemporary challenge of appropriating these CEMs into the diverse cultural and spiritual contexts of Asian societies, as well as the work required to accomplish this task. The second speaker, an Indian Montfortian religious from Saint-Gabriel, explored in detail, and shared with the participants, his reflections on Asian spiritual traditions. This insightful presentation served as a bridge linking the riches of Asian spirituality to Marianist educational philosophy.



**Participants outside Karnataka State Parliament, Bangalore.**

The digital age, a frontier influencing education worldwide, was divided into three sub-themes. Three *Carmelite* religious of *Mary Immaculate*, professors at *Christ University of Bangalore*, proceeded to develop their thoughts concerning this modern development. The first explored the link between "artificial intelligence and education", contemplating both its potential and its dangers. The second drew public attention to the concept of "Gamification" [= use of video game methods] in education, highlighting its potential to rekindle learner confidence and engagement. The third speaker concluded this segment by presenting "The critical choices to be made in the digital age for education in Asia".

Ms. Anita Cherian, a prominent women's rights activist in India, focused on

"young women and education in Asian cultures". Her presentation is part of the symposium's commitment to inclusion and equality, addressing crucial issues concerning the education of young women in various Asian contexts. The cycle of interventions ended with Lalitha Thomas, Sister of St Joseph of Tarbes, who was one of two representatives of Asian religious in Rome for the synod on synodality. She reported on her experience of this synod and provoked a rich dialog on the crucial theme of synodality.



**Participants in a meeting.**

Despite the wide diversity of languages and educational backgrounds among the participants, the symposium fostered rich and interesting exchanges. Valuable knowledge has been gained, and awareness raised, concerning the challenges of their mission in today's educational landscape. The symposium not only offered a platform for intellectual discourse, but also planted in hearts a keen desire for collaboration that should enable Zone members to navigate the changing landscape of Marianist education in Asia.

On January 22, 2024, at the closing Mass of the Symposium, three Indian brothers professed their perpetual vows at Deepahalli: Ajay Soreng, Matthew Mullangi and Pitar Tirkey. After Tokyo in 2019, and Bangalore in 2024, the next



meeting is scheduled for 2026-2027, in Korea, to continue this experience of exchange and consultation between members of the Marianist family in Asia.

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## Jakob Gapp (1897-1943), one migrant among many



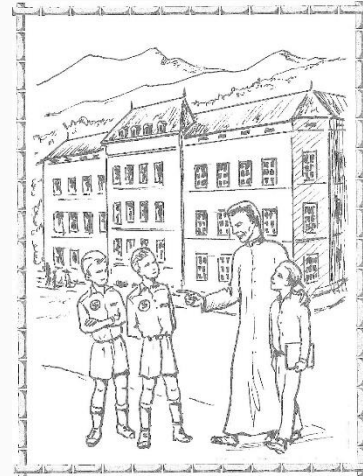
We know Blessed Jakob Gapp's uncompromising character and the analysis he made of the writings emanating from National Socialism: he was convinced "that Nazism and Catholicism are incompatible." He felt confirmed in this analysis by Pope Pius XI's letter: *Mit brennender Sorge* (With Burning Concern), secretly distributed and read in all Catholic parishes in Germany on March 21, 1937. He could not keep this truth to himself. He taught it to his students and to anyone else who would listen.

On March 12, 1938, Germany annexed Austria. Father Gapp was a teacher-educator in Graz. He was also committed to helping the poorest of the poor. The director of the Marieninstitut, fearing that the Nazis would take over the school, asked the religious to wear the swastika and make the Hitler salute, which Jacob naturally refused to do.

His superiors sent him to Freistadt, but the situation did not improve and he continued to teach the incompatibility of Nazism with Catholicism.

During the summer of 1938, when Father Jung was Assistant General, the situation was more than delicate (the schools had been seized by the authorities), and the religious were asked to go and work in other countries. As the Marianist schools had all been nationalized, Father Gapp took up a post as curate in a parish in the Tyrol, teaching catechism in the schools that still had some freedom to teach.

He answered young people's questions and showed them the incompatibility of Nazi ideology with the Christian faith. Denounced, he admitted the facts to the inspector and was suspended as a catechist. Taking refuge with his family, he worked at various jobs. On December 11, 1938, he preached in the parish of *Wattens*, where he was born. Despite his brother's warning, he denounced the Nazi campaign against the Peter's Pence. He also warned the people not to read Rosenberg's book *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*. The die was cast, he must leave, and quickly!



This political migrant, with a passport obtained from an acquaintance and a visa for France, took the train to Vienna and then Milan. After spending a few days at the Marianist school in Cannes, then in Montauban, he arrived in Bordeaux at the Chapel of the Madeleine. However, the mood is heavy with criticism of the Germans, lumping everyone together. Jakob, now Father Jacques (since he was in France), sometimes became too forceful in, defending his compatriots. Franco-German hostility was still strong after the First World War, and the rise of Nazism did not help matters. In addition, while Father Jacques helped in the community, he lacked mobility and human contact, since he was confined to the library of the Madeleine. He told his superiors that he would like to move to another community.

Spain could offer him a new refuge. On May 23, 1939, he left Bordeaux for San Sebastian, where, after an ill-timed Nazi salute from a young cleric, he felt he was in a more favorable climate than in France, but criticized the Spaniards for a lack of analysis of what was happening in Germany. Father Santiago Gapp experienced great inner instability and homesickness. He moved from one community to another: Cadiz, San Sebastian, Lequeitio, Valencia... and finally the deceptive "excursion" proposed by German "friends", which ended in Hendaye, where he was picked up by the Gestapo. Transferred to Berlin, after bearing witness to his faith and love for his country to the very end, he was declared a traitor to his country and executed on August 13, 1943.



**The places where Fr. Gapp lived.**

Jakob, like a hunted migrant, has much in common with today's migrants. Political exile, misunderstanding, prejudice and stereotypes are the lot of so many displaced people, sometimes treated like a child despite our good will. His experience invites us to take a broader look at the phenomenon of migration, to be wary of overly superficial analyses, and to dare to welcome others as they are, with their differences that can become shared wealth. Let us be touched by their lives, listen to their testimonies, the abuses they have suffered, open up to the geopolitics of their countries to better understand them.

How open are we going to be to these hunted people from elsewhere? Let us not forget to support them in prayer too, and entrust them to the intercession of Blessed Jakob Gapp: the exiled migrant who gave his life as a witness to the truth.

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## Online Synodality Training (March 2024)

With the support of Boston College, an intercontinental online course (MOOC) on synodality is available. The theme is: ***Towards a constitutive synodal church***. The speakers are experts from different countries. You need to register online. The course is free of charge.

By opening this link : <https://t.ly/ehoPw>, you will find the course program, methodology, speakers and registration information in seven languages.

We encourage those who are interested and available to take advantage of this opportunity.

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## Marianist Crosses Available

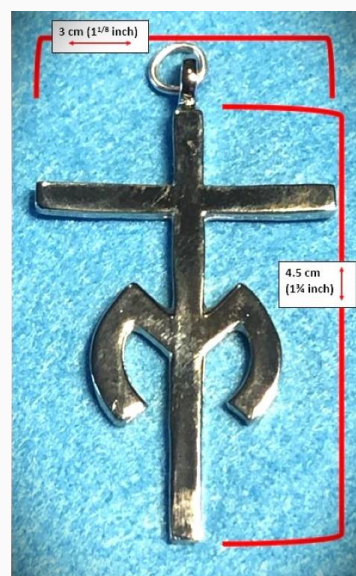


The General Administration has a limited supply of newly minted Marianist Crosses. They are made of tarnish-resistant metal and come with an eyelet affixed to the top, so that a chain may be easily

attached (chain not included).

The actual dimensions of the cross are 3 cm x 4.5 cm (1 1/8 in x 1 3/4 in) as shown in the photo to the right.

The cost is €2.85 (\$3.00 USD) for each cross + postage. Those interested may contact [webmaster@smcuria.it](mailto:webmaster@smcuria.it) to order the crosses or for more information.



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## Prayer for Peace



*Mary, look at us! We stand here before you. You are our Mother, and you know our struggles and our hurts. Queen of Peace, you suffer with us and for us, as you see so many of your children suffering from the conflicts and wars that are tearing our world apart.*

*This is a dark hour, Mother. In this dark hour, we look to you, and in the light of your countenance we entrust ourselves and our problems to your maternal Heart, which knows our anxieties and fears.*

*How great was your concern when there was no place for Jesus at the inn! How great was your fear when you fled in haste to Egypt because Herod sought to kill him! How great was your anguish before you found him in the Temple! Yet, Mother, amid those trials, you showed your strength, you acted boldly: you trusted in God and responded to concern with tender care, to fear with love, to anguish with acceptance. Mother, you did not step back, but at decisive moments you always took initiative: with haste you visited Elizabeth; at the wedding feast of Cana you prompted Jesus' first miracle; in the Upper Room you kept the disciples united. And when, on Calvary, a sword pierced your heart, Mother, by your humility and strength you kept alive the hope of Easter through the night of sorrow.*

*Your faithful people call you the dawn of salvation; Mother, grant that glimmers of light may illumine the dark night of conflict. Dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit, inspire the leaders of nations to seek paths of peace. Queen of all peoples, reconcile your children, seduced by evil, blinded by power and hate. You, who are close to all, shorten our distances. You, who have compassion on everyone, teach us to care for one another. You, who reveal the Lord's tender love, make us witnesses of his consolation and peace. Mother, Queen of Peace, pour forth into our hearts God's gift of harmony. Amen.*

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## CORRECTION

In the list of Jubilarians of the last issue of Via Latina 22 (January 2024) due to an error when transferring the data to the database, two errors occurred:

-The date of the ordination of Father Robert Witwicki (FR) was incorrect: the correct date is April 7, 1974.

-We should add to the list Father José Antonio Barbudo (ES), whose fiftieth anniversary of priestly ordination is September 14, 2024.

## G.A. Communications recently sent

- **Jan. 23 : *Bulletin #2*** from the Preparatory Commission of the XXXVI General Chapter. in three languages, to all Marianist religious.
- **Jan. 27 : *S.M. 3 Offices # 160 - Distribution of Funds for the Marianist Solidarity Fund and the Marianist Formation Fund 2024***, in three languages, to all Marianist religious, sent from Bro. Michael McAward, SM, Assistant General for Temporalities.

## Change of Adresses

Bro. Sang Joon Thomas Park (KO): [Bro.sangjoonpark@gmail.com](mailto:Bro.sangjoonpark@gmail.com)